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with the lowest summit between the Minnesota, and the Red River of the North.

The meteorological phenomena at the different points on a river traversing 20° of latitude must, under all circumstances, be extremely varied. The difference in the mean temperature between New Orleans and the mouth of the Minnesota River, is 25° 3, and the difference in the mean annual rain-fall, is 25.78 inches: in other words, twice as much rain falls at the former as at the latter place. But the difference of summer temperature between the two places is only 11° 7 *Fahr.*—that at New Orleans being 82° 3, and at the mouth of the Minnesota, 70° 6. At New Orleans the average amount of rain-fall for summer is 13.35 inches, and at the mouth of the Minnesota, 10.92 inches. As only one important crop is annually grown in any part of the valley, and as every portion of it has, for the summer months, sufficient heat and moisture for the maturing of the crops appropriate to its different portions, the economic difference between the climate of New Orleans and St. Paul is by no means to be measured by the difference of heat or rain-fall for the year at the two places. It is probable that the products of the soil per acre in Minnesota will be quite as valuable as the average products of any of the States bordering the river, though a higher culture may be required as we ascend northward.

Of the crops in the Mississippi Valley, Indian corn is common to the whole extent of it. In all the Northern States this matures in favorable seasons in from 100 to 120 days. Oats cover the next widest belt, their successful culture extending very nearly to the Gulf of Mexico. Irish potatoes come next. Commencing from the Gulf is a narrow belt of sugar lands extending north to lat 31°. The cotton belt extends from the Gulf to lat. 35°. At this parallel commences the cultivation of tobacco and hemp, which in the Mississippi Valley is confined chiefly to the States of Tennessee, Kentucky and Missouri. The cultivation of wheat, oats and potatoes extends far north into the British possessions. Throughout the whole extent of the Valley of the Mississippi, forest trees, bearing witness to the excellence of the soil and climate, have a vigorous and thrifty growth and attain a large size. In all respects this great valley for its whole extent is wonderfully fitted for the abode of man.

The following table will show the elevation of different points of the upper portions of the basin of the Mississippi above, and their distances from, the Gulf of Mexico:

	Distance from the G. of Mexico. Miles.	Elevat'n above the G. of M. Feet.
Summit of Dividing Ridge at the head of the Mississippi River	2,896	1,680
Itasca Lake	2,890	1,578
Cass Lake	2,755	1,402
Swan River	2,564	1,290
Mouth of Crow Wing River	2,380	1,130
Falls of St. Anthony	2,200	856
Mouth of Minnesota River	2,192	744
Height of Land at head of Big Sioux River	....	1,896
Coteau des Prairies	....	2,000
Devil's Lake	....	1,476
Coteau des Prairies du Missouri	....	2,096

MOUNTAINS OF NORTH CAROLINA.

It is not unknown among scientific men that the highest peak in the United States, east of the Rocky Mountains, is in the magnificent mountain scenery of North Carolina and East Tennessee, which may be called the Switzerland of the Atlantic States.

Heretofore, it has been supposed that Mount Mitchell, (named from the late Prof. Mitchell, of the University of N. C., who first measured its true altitude, as has been conclusively shown by Professor Charles Phillips, of the same institution,) is the highest peak. It is 6,711 feet high. It would, however, appear from the communication below, that there is a still higher peak in the great Smoky or Unaka range of mountains, on the line between North Carolina and Tennessee, near the head waters of the Oconaluftee and Little Pigeon rivers.

Messrs. Editors:

I have recently had letters from S. B. Buckley, Esq., giving me information of the results of recent explorations he has been making among the mountains of North Carolina. Since the letters reached me, I have had the additional pleasure of a personal interview with Mr. Buckley, and now enclose the most important of the facts I have derived from him, in the hope that you will deem them worthy of preservation in your "Journal," as a contribution to the Physical Geography of the United States.

Very respectfully yours,
F. L. H.
New York, December 31, 1858.

Mount Le Conte—so named in honor of Prof. J. Le Conte, of Columbia, S. C. This is 6,670 feet high, situated three miles north of the gap of the road leading from the head waters of the Oconaluftee, in Jackson County, North Carolina, down those of the Little Pigeon to Sevierville, in Tennessee.

Safford's Peak—named thus in compliment to Prof. Safford, the State Geologist of Tennessee—is 6,559 feet high, and is at the east end of Mount Le Conte. These two are entirely in Tennessee.

Mount Guyot—so called from Prof. Guyot, of Princeton, who has also made measurements of some of these mountains. This elevation reaches to the height of 6,734 feet, and is on the state line, about twelve miles N. E. of Mount Le Conte.

Mount Henry—in honor of Prof. Henry, of the Smithsonian Institute. This is nearly one mile north of Mount Guyot, and is 6,425 feet high. All these are in the range of what are called the Smoky Mountains, and have never before had specific names bestowed on them.

Monnt Buckley—so named by the associate of Mr. Buckley in his work. This is the highest peak yet measured; and both this and Mount Guyot are higher than Mount Mitchell. Mount Buckley, 6,755 feet high, is about twenty miles southwest of Mount Guyot. It is at the spot marked "Alpine," on the geological map of Tennessee, and the state line passes over its summit. This, so far as we now know, is the highest point in the United States, east of the Rocky Mountains.

Many other elevations were measured by Mr. Buckley, of which he furnished me with memoranda, of which I will not now speak. He has given me, however, some notes of the *Flora* of these mountains, which I subjoin.

These elevations, he remarks, very satisfactorily show why Western North Carolina and Eastern Tennessee have a northern climate though in a southern latitude. His observations also demonstrate that the highest mountains at the South are not the sources of the *largest* rivers.

He found the loftiest mountains covered with *Abies Nigra* and the *Abies Fraseri;* these are rarely found however below an elevation of 4,000 feet. The largest tree he met with in these mountains is the *Liriodendron Tulipifera*, called "tulip tree" in New England, and "poplar" in the South and West. He found trees varying in diameter from five feet to eleven feet.

The chestnut (*Castanea Americana*) also attains to great size, and retains an almost cylindrical trunk for fifty feet or more. In Haywood county, in one locality, three were found, the average diameter of which was ten feet.

The *White Oak;* this was found from sixteen to nineteen feet in circumference.

Abies Canadensis—the "spruce pine" of the South and hemlock of the North—is quite common, but rarely at an elevation of more than 4,000 feet. Its circumference, in some instances, is from 16 to 19 feet.

Abies Nigra.—The Black Spruce; it is called by the inhabitants *he*-balsam.

Abies Fraseri, called *she*-balsam, because it yields more balsam than the preceding. In the mountains of Haywood county it reaches a height of 100 feet, with a diameter at the base of three or four feet. It has been doubted whether this tree is to be found in New England; but Mr. Buckley has seen one from the White Mountains. The white pine of New England is found in the mountains of Haywood county, and is probably among the highest trees in that locality. Mr. Buckley saw one at least 150 feet in length; the usual diameter, however, rarely exceeded three feet. This is probably the southern limit of the white pine.

Magnolia, called the cucumber tree. This grows to an immense size. The largest seen had a circumference of 24 feet, and its usual diameter was from three to four feet.

Black Walnut.—This is not uncommon, and has been seen with a circumference of 16 feet. It is much used by cabinet makers.

Pinus Pungens.—This is a rare species of pine, remarkable for its singular and beautiful cone. Michaux saw a solitary specimen on Table Rock, near Morganton, and has described it. Mr. Buckley has supplied the Messrs. Parsons, of Flushing, L.I., with some of the seed.

The *Catalpa* is indigenous, and is found not only on the mountains, but also in other parts of the State.

The trees above mentioned will suggest to those acquainted with climatology, as indicated in the vegetable productions of a country, the existence of a winter climate in a part of North Carolina not unlike that of our more northern latitudes. In fact, there is no portion of the United States more salubrious than the mountains of North Carolina.

Supplementary to the above remarks by our respected contributor, we append in tabular form, a description, which we have obtained from another source, of the several mountains measured barometrically by Professor Buckley in 1858.

1. Highest Mountains of Western North Carolina.

	Feet.
Cold Mountain: near the forks of Pidgeon River, Haywood County	6,103
Shining Rock: a white quartz mountain five miles south of Cold Mountain	6,063
Wilson's Balsam: from four to six miles south of Shining Rock	6,270
Mount Hargrove: one mile west of Wilson's Balsam	6,156
Devil's Court House: south of, and connected with Wilson's Balsam	6,057
Mount Hardy: at the head of Tuckaseye, French Broad and Pidgeon Rivers, and long supposed by many to be the highest mountain in the State	6,257
Mount Lenoir: ten miles north of Mount Hardy, at the head of Carey Fork, and near Balsam Spring—a rough balsam mountain	6,413
Mount Cathey: three miles north of Mount Lenoir	5,742
Amos Plotts' Balsam: near the head of Jonathan's Soco and Scott's Creeks	6,406
Mount Starling: on the Cataluche Road	6,456
Mount Emmons: or, Emmons' Balsam Mountain, south of Mount Starling	6,465
White Side Mountain	5,076
☞ From the top of White Side to the base of its precipice on its south side	1,510
Mount McDowell: twelve miles northeast of White Side	5,106

2. Highest Peaks of Smoky Mountain.

On or near the line between N. Carolina and Tennessee.

Mount Guyot: Near the head of Ravensfork, a tributary of the Oconaluftee in Jackson County, North Carolina, and fifteen miles southwest from where Pidgeon River, enters Tennessee	6,734
Mount Le Conte: north of the road leading up Little Pidgeon River, over the mountains in North Carolina, and three miles from said road and near Album Cave. It is entirely in Tennessee, and is probably the highest point of land in that State	6670
Peck's Peak: three miles east of Mount Le Conte	6,338
Mount Collins: second peak of the highest peak	6,241
Mount Mingus: first peak north of the road above mentioned	5,779
Buckley's Peak: the highest of the Smoky Mountains near the head of Deep Creek and Noland's Creek, tributary to the Tuckasege in North Carolina and Little River in Tennessee, lying partly in Sevier County, Tennessee; and it is possible that a portion of it may be in Blount County, Tennessee. It is covered with fine balsam	6,755

Mount Washington, as reported by Joel W. Andrews, in the Report of the Regents of the University in New York, for 1855, is elevated 6,496 feet above the sea. Hitherto its height has been variously stated at 6,526 feet (Lippincott's Gazetteer) and 6,428 feet, (Fisher's Gazetteer.)

[Communicated.]

THE PROPOSED NEW TERRITORIES—AN IMPORTANT INQUIRY IN REFERENCE TO THEM.

As general attention is now directed to the proposed territories of Colona, (?) Laramie, Ne-